Wisconsin State Reading Association

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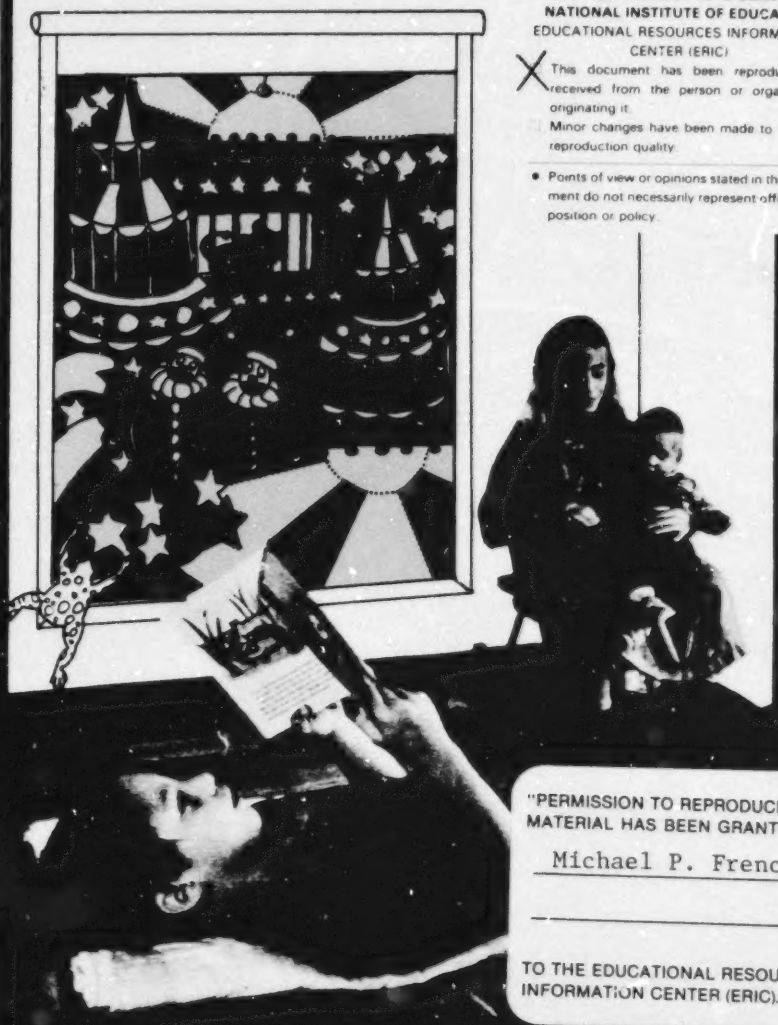

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JOURNAL

Volume 29, No. 3, Spring 1985

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WISCONSIN STATE READING ASSOCIATION JOURNAL
Volume 29, Number 3, Spring 1985
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Front Cover Artwork and Photography by Dee Walter
Wayland Academy, Beaver Dam, Wisconsin

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE | Dr. Donna D. Thomas

It's almost impossible to believe that an entire year has passed and my term as WSRA President is rapidly coming to an end. The three years spent working from Vice-President Elect to Vice-President and finally to the presidency have been professionally rewarding not because of what I personally accomplished, but because of the things I have observed being accomplished by dedicated WSRA officers, committees, and members. The expanded knowledge and ideas gained from others, the new friends made, and the cementing of old friendships all lead me to say, "I would do it all again!" It has been exciting over the past three years to see WSRA grow, succeed, and have a diverse positive impact on reading instruction in Wisconsin. I am truly grateful to the membership of WSRA for providing me the opportunity to serve in the organization's highest position of leadership. This prestigious opportunity doesn't come to one's doorstep very often. I am also grateful to the Lake Mills School District and my fellow colleagues in the district for their support, assistance, and understanding. In addition, I cannot express acknowledgements without mentioning my dear friend, Melva Kleist, who was most responsible for encouraging me to run for office.

Three years ago I entered the Vice-President Elect position with eagerness, and today I leave the presidency with the same eagerness. I know WSRA is in the hands of competent new leaders who will take the organization to even higher levels of achievement.

It is interesting to end my term as our journal theme focuses on content reading. Along with a few other brave souls, I began forging my way into that area called "content reading" in the mid 1970's. Most of us at the time were elementary trained professionals and heavily experienced in elementary education. Our first "big shock" in content reading came when we realized that:

1. elementary reading structures and techniques couldn't just be duplicated and superimposed into the secondary educational/content setting.
2. secondary content teachers had different educational delivery systems from elementary teachers.
3. secondary teachers weren't going to welcome us with "open arms" into the content domain.
4. as trained reading professionals we knew much about the subject of reading, but we had much to learn about how to relate our knowledge to such things as science, social studies, English, mathematics, music, vocational education, etc.

During these early days while facing the above outlined issues, our problems were compounded due to a poverty of content

reading literature, research and established model programs. At times it seemed we were wandering on a desert searching against all odds for that path which would lead to success.

Our saving grace during these early days was not primarily based on our good cognitive skills but on our good affective skills. Luckily for us our professors had taught us the importance of challenge, perserverance, self-initiative, determination, and motivation to learn. All of these attributes to succeed where it seemed no one ever before had dared to tread. As the years passed, content teachers began to trust us and respect our knowledge and skills. In retrospect, their trust probably increased as our own knowledge increased about content reading and content area teacher needs.

The progress made in content reading in the past ten years has been phenomenal. Not only have there been tremendous strides forward in content reading at the secondary level, but we have reached a point where we are also addressing the importance of content reading skills at the elementary level.

Although we still have many miles to travel in the content reading realm. We have made definite and recognizable progress in changing opinions so that reading is no longer conceived as a subject only to be taught in isolation, but as a process for learning that is interwoven and integrated into all aspects of the total curriculum.

WSRA

FROM THE EDITOR ▮ Michael P. French

Welcome to the Spring Issue of the WSRA Journal. This issue marks the beginning of the second half of my term as editor. I mention this only because we have begun the search for the next editor of the Journal. If you are journalistically inclined or know someone who might like to assume the responsibility of editing this journal, let us know.

Before I introduce this issue of the Journal, I would like to bring you up to date with several changes in personnel on the editorial staff of the WSRA Journal.

First, I would like to introduce and welcome Shirley Elford to the editorial staff. Shirley is a teacher in Horicon who has a background in journalism. Shirley will be the Associate Editor of the Journal and will also review manuscripts for publication.

Second, there has been a change in leadership on the Publications Committee. Doug Beuhl will assume the chairpersonship of the committee replacing Craig Hitchens. We thank Craig for his past support of the Journal and welcome Doug to the Publications Committee.

Third, we are sorry to report that this will be Doug Vance's last Research Update column. Doug has been named State IRA Coordinator and will be pursuing those responsibilities. We will miss Doug's reviews but wish him the best in his new assignment. Look for his first State Coordinator's message in the Summer issue of the Journal. As of this date, a replacement columnist has yet to be named.

And finally, a fourth change involves Michael Higgin's role as Advertising Manager. Mike has recently been elected to the Executive Committee of the WSRA. Therefore, he will no longer be able to handle the advertising responsibilities. We are currently searching for a replacement and would welcome applications for this position.

This issue is also the last for Donna Thomas as President of WSRA. As editor of the Journal, I have greatly enjoyed working with her this last year and wish her only the best in her future pursuits. Look for Judy Casey's first President's Message in the Summer Issue.

About This Issue

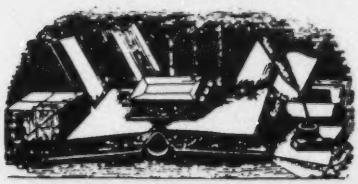
The theme for this issue is Reading in the Content Area and features an interview with Carol Santa of Kalispell, Montana. Carol has been active in Wisconsin presenting workshops and sectionals on this topic. The interview was conducted by Doug Beuhl of Madison East High School.

This issue also features four articles from Wisconsin authors, a motivational message from Kristen Broderick and, once again, the poetry of Jim Paprocki. In addition, you will find columns and reviews from our regular contributing editors.

So, I hope that you enjoy this issue of the Journal. And one last comment, now that the summer is here, why not use it to compose an article for the Journal? The themes and deadlines for the coming year are listed on page 33.

EDITOR POSITION VACANCY

The position of Editor of the WSRA Journal for Volumes 31, 32, and 33 will be filled during 1985. In this regard, the WSRA Publications Committee is interested in locating individuals interested in becoming Editor of the Wisconsin State Reading Association Journal. Anyone wishing further information is asked to contact Mrs. Judith Casey, WSRA President, 400 S. Silver Lake Road, Oconomowoc WI 53066, or the current Editor, Michael P. French.



WANTED: MORE CARING IN THE CLASSROOM!

Kristen Broderick
Pound, Wisconsin

The Hallmark greeting card company uses as its slogan — Care enough to send the very best. I have found myself pondering for long moments over what greeting card has the best message for someone's birthday, anniversary, wedding or shower. As educators we need to use as much care and concern with messages given to our students, both bodily and verbally, everyday. As an educator who cares enough to do my best, I would like to share a few ideas with you about classroom caring.

Care Enough

Care enough
to show love.

Remember the hugs, winks and smiles. Teach to the heart as well as to the mind.

Care enough
to be assertive rather than aggressive.

When things go wrong, deal with the event, not with the child. Personal criticism creates negative feelings about one's self. Say, "Oh, oh, the paint spilled - get a cloth and let's clean it up," rather than, "Now look what you did, you clumsy so and so."

Care enough
to avoid sarcasm.

To guests who enter our classroom we are automatically helpful. If a guest breaks an item we often say, "Don't worry about it." To children our reaction is often quite different: "Whatever you touch, you break. You are so clumsy!" Remember children are guests in our classrooms, too. Teacher power demands that we learn to react courteously and helpfully to mishaps.

Care enough
to be a good listener.

Leo Buscaglia shares a simple rule with his audience: "People first, things second." As educators this is a good rule to remember. Listen intently to what children say. Often we learn things from them too!

Care enough
to allow children their imagination.

Children need roots and wings. We provide a good foundation for students academically. Providing for students creativity is equally important. Creativity helps us realize and recognize new alternatives for old problems. The future belongs to the children, allow them imagination to deal with it.

Care enough
to be consistent.

Be permissive in dealing with feelings and wishes, be strict in dealing with undesireable behavior. Recognize students' rights to dream and desire, but put sensible limits on actions. Be fair to the students and to yourself.

Care enough
to be a good model.

For a child to show good behaviors, model good behaviors. For a student to be excited about learning, be exciting about teaching!

Care enough
to ponder Maslow's theory that "I am my own project and make myself."

We need to continue to learn and grow as educators and people. A very vivid passage referring to this concept goes like this: "There is a most rewarding way to look at what you are: The anatomy or 'clay' of humanity is inherited and the environment is the 'wheel' which gives finish to the clay. The master sculptor either refines and adds all the beauty and proportion he can, or does little to improve it." Of course, *you* are that sculptor and if you care enough, you will care enough to become your very best.

Care enough
to believe that caring can be the creative force for a wonderful teaching career.

Where is the caring?

I think we all have the potential to care, but it is only a potential, unless you do something about it, it is not going to be realized. And so, my fellow educators, I give you this challenge —

Care enough to use your potential!!

LET'S TEACH STRATEGIES INSTEAD OF SKILLS

JoAnne Caldwell
Cardinal Stritch College
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Picture a scene all too common in reading classrooms across the nation. Johnnie or Susie has just been asked to identify the main idea of a paragraph and has failed to do so. The typical remedy involves the teacher supplying the correct answer and then assigning another paragraph. Should Johnnie or Susie fail again, another and perhaps shorter paragraph will be supplied, then another and another. The rationale behind this is that exposure to the task of identifying a main idea will result in eventual mastery. Such "skill and drill" exercises seem to be based on the premise that if a child is given enough exposure to a skill, eventually the child will learn how to perform it in an acceptable manner. This happens for a large number of children but unfortunately many Johnnies and Susies never seem to acquire the skill that the main idea task demands. In other words, they do not learn strategies.

A strategy is different from a skill. A skill is a level of performance that one attains. Brown and Bransford (1982) describe it as a learner characteristic like knowledge and attitudes. Whether one is talking about skill in skiing, cooking or comprehending written text, a skill level can be achieved in two general ways. As described above, skill can be attained through repeated exposures to varied situations calling for exercise of the skill. For example, if one engages in racquetball over a period of time with different opponents, one's skill level will most probably increase. For some skills and for some people, such exposure is all that is needed. A second and more effective way to acquire skill is through direct instruction in strategies that clearly show **how** a skill should be performed. The racquetball instructor can demonstrate and model how to hold the racquet, how to pivot, how to swing, etc. Such direct instruction is common in sports, art, and vocational trades; it is unfortunately sadly lacking in reading instruction. We ask children to find the main idea; we seldom show them how to do it.

While a skill is a level of competence attained, a strategy is **how** that competence is achieved. A strategy is a deliberate, planned and conscious activity. Given a certain goal and a specific situation such as playing racquetball with one individual as opposed to playing with another, the player engages in different strategies that will hopefully result in goal attainment, victory. Given a certain purpose for reading and a specific text, the reader consciously applies various strategies in order to gain meaning. What strategies do we offer children who are struggling to identify the main idea? We generally say that the main idea is contained in the topic sentence. Then we go on to explain that the topic sentence is usually the first sentence of a paragraph. Of course it may be

the last sentence. Sometimes it is found in the middle of the paragraph and there are some paragraphs that have no topic sentence at all! This is hardly a workable strategy for the Johnnies and Susies who are doggedly searching for the elusive main idea.

Garner (1984) categories strategic readers as those who understand what they read and know what to do when they do not. Research in cognitive psychology strongly suggests that reading instruction should involve more than just exposure situations. Instead, strageties for comprehending text need to be directly taught. Unfortunately, this seldom occurs in our reading classrooms. Durkin (1977) observed 17,997 minutes of instruction in reading and social studies classes. She found less than 1 percent of this time was spent in direct instruction, in activities where teachers interacted with the students about how ones goes about finding meaning in text. Her analysis of basal manuals (1981) isolated a similar pattern. Children were told to perform a comprehension task such as locating a main idea. They were asked numerous questions designed to determine if they had met success. However, they were given no instructions in how to do it. Pearson (1981) suggests that there is something suspicious about a position that says if children are having trouble with X, what they need is more practice with X. While some children may interalize effective strategies on their own, many will not. What would seem to be needed is direct instruction of student based strategies that can be consciously applied during the reading/ studying act.

Can such strategies be taught? Rohler and Duffy (1984) certainly believe so. They audiotaped elementary teachers and analyzed the tapes for evidence of explicit teaching of strategies. They found a close correlation between student achievement and explicit teacher instruction. In addition children were asked three questions after each lesson: What did you learn? Why did you learn it? How do you do it? They found that children who had been exposed to explicit strategy instruction were better able to verbalize what they had been taught and the rationale for so doing.

Hansen (1981) trained children to draw inferences using a prereading prediction strategy and a visual model that showed comprehension as involving the relation of old and new information. Such strategy instruction was effective for both younger and poorer readers. Raphael and Gavelek (1984) taught strategies for answering questions by first identifying the different places in the text where answers could be found. Palincsar and Brown (1983) involved students in reciprocal teaching that utilized strategies for summarizing, questioning and predicting. The success engendered by these training paradigms is encouraging evidence that comprehension strategies can indeed be taught.

Let us return to main idea and consider it from the viewpoint of strategy instruction. Paris, Oka, and DeBritto (1983) suggest that children need to know three things about any skill. They should first know about the nature of the skill in question. For example, where are main ideas to be found and exactly how do they differ from statements of detail? What is the purpose of learning the skill of main idea apart from the need to fill out numerous workbook and skill sheet exercises? How can the identification of main ideas help a reader? Can we assume that our students will independently recognize that each and every paragraph does not necessarily contain a main idea but that a single main idea can carry over several paragraphs? Can we assume that our students will independently arrive at an understanding that reading for main ideas represents a more manageable task for memory than trying to remember everything? Can we assume that our students will independently recognize that the main ideas of a text provide an overview of a selection and thus offer a structure to which we can attach details that both amplify and explain? Or should we tell them these things, showing how main ideas operate in connected discourse as opposed to single isolated paragraphs and demonstrating the effectiveness of remembering main ideas and utilizing the structure they provide.

Paris et al. suggests that students then need to be told how to perform a skill. They need to be given strategies for doing this. Despite the fact that identification of main ideas is never the same act but differs according to the topic and organization of the text, some regularities may suggest strategies that can be applied. Such strategies can be identified by introspection. Read some challenging material and examine what it is you do when faced with making sense out of difficult text. Ask students to do the same. While this is initially a difficult task, it gradually becomes easier. Such introspection often results in strategic questions that a reader might possibly ask him/herself when attempting to identify the main idea. Do the title and heading suggest the main idea? Is the same word or synonym found in each or most of the sentences? Does any sentence offer information that is more broad or general than the other sentences? Do I know anything about this topic or a similar topic that would help determine the main idea? Do the sentences tell who, what, when, where or why? The "who" and "what" are often the core components of the main idea. What kind of information is added by each sentence? Is it description? If so, the thing being described is probably the main idea. Is it comparison? The main idea may well state the items being compared and contrasted. In addition to asking such questions of oneself, another way to main idea is through the application of Brown's summarization strategies (Recht, 1984). If trivialities and redundancies are deleted and superor-

dinate terms are provided for common items or actions, then one is often left with the main ideas of a selection.

According to Paris et al., the third thing that students need to know is when a specific strategy should be used and why it will be effective in that specific situation. When should students attempt to identify main ideas on their own? Is there realistically a time for this apart from the workbook activities so common in our reading classrooms? Can we assume that students will independently transfer strategies learned in a workbook or classroom setting to their own reading and learning activities? Can we assume that students will independently recognize that main ideas are effective when preparing reports or studying for essay tests, when reading for general information, or when attempting to acquaint oneself with new and unfamiliar material. Or should we tell them these things and demonstrate their effectiveness?

Once strategies have been identified, how does one go about teaching them? The successful research designs have employed direct teacher modeling, much guided practice and feedback, and student verbalization of what is being done, why they are doing it and how it is being engaged. The teacher models and verbalizes and the student reciprocates. The emphasis is less on the right answer and more on how the answer was acquired. Modeling a thinking process for students can admittedly be scary at first but the unfamiliarity soon wears off. Pearson (1981) envisions the teacher of the eighties as taking a more active and direct role instruction. He suggests that what may be best for students, especially those experiencing difficulty, is not another worksheet but a live body to model, to guide and to offer feedback.

If you asked someone to give you instruction in how to drive a car in a typical Wisconsin blizzard, you might be very disappointed and not a little upset if you were handed the keys during a raging storm and told to go out on your own and try driving. If you returned with nerves raw and your car visibly battered, only to be told to get back in and try again, you might be even more upset. Chances are you would drop the issue before you had attained proficiency. How much easier it would have been if your instructor had done the initial driving, modeling how to handle the slippery roads and verbalizing what was being done and why. How much more efficient and considerate if, after a suitable time, you were then asked to drive but with your instructor guiding you and providing substantive feedback. This may seem like a rather exaggerated analogy, but are we in fact giving the kids the car keys in a snow storm and sending them off on their own? Wouldn't it be easier to give them strategies to guide them through the blizzard until they can independently handle it on their own? If students do not learn to perform those skills we set before them, it may be that they find the price of learning them too high. Perhaps teaching

strategies through demonstration may be a more effective instructional methodology than teaching skills through exposure.

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TEACHING READING IN ELEMENTARY CONTENT AREAS

Susan Young Hoffman
DeForest Area Schools
DeForest, Wisconsin

The natural response of an elementary teacher to the question "Do you teach reading?" is "Of course!" But a likely response to "*When* to you teach reading?" is "Daily from 9:00 to 10:15." In the minds of many elementary teachers, the teaching of reading stops when the basals are put away and content area work begins.

However, teachers consciously should carry on reading instruction throughout the teaching of content materials to maximize learning. Although the average basal reading program trains students to be skillful in a number of fundamental reading practices, the elementary teacher must guide students to selectively apply those skills to content materials.

The transfer of basal-taught reading skills is not automatic for a variety of reasons. To begin with, basals are written primarily in a narrative style; content textbooks are expository. Karlin (1975) found there is a much greater likelihood that children will encounter more difficulties in reading information material than they will in reading stories, even if both are drawing from materials intended for the same grade level.

Secondly, not only a challenging style but also a challenging vocabulary confronts elementary students reading content materials. Stauffer (1966) compared vocabulary in primary arithmetic, science, and health textbooks with the vocabulary of basal readers for grades one through three and found that 1331 words in arithmetic, 900 words in health, and 809 words in science did not appear in the basal readers. The efforts of publishers in recent years may have bridged this gap somewhat, but elementary teachers must be continually aware of vocabulary inconsistencies in all that their children are expected to read.

Finally, basals frequently neglect study skills instruction which could help students transfer reading skills from basal reader stories to content area textbooks (Wood and Mateja, 1983). Furthermore, there has been little research on the difficulty of this transfer by elementary students. It has been assumed erroneously by both teachers and educational researchers that the responsiblity of content instruction lies solely on the secondary school.

"Skill of the Month" Program

The "Skill of the Month" program is a systematic approach to this neglected field of reading instruction, the elementary content area. This program encourages teachers to emphasize a particular

reading skill each month through student and teacher motivational activities. It can be set up and maintained by a reading specialist, principal, or an interested teacher or team.

The conscious integration of reading skills into the existing curriculum without altering content is the key to the program's succest. The program works around the assumption that the good teacher already teaches students how to read content materials efficiently but needs the encouragement that he or she is doing the right thing and the motivation to continue. For the less than perfect teacher, "Skill of the Month" creates an awareness that the teaching of reading extends throughout the school day.

Each month of the school year provides a time frame for a school-wide emphasis of a reading skill and incorporation of it into the content areas. An important aspect of the program is to motivate teachers to consciously emphasize the skill throughout the month. As a matter of introduction, a short staff program should be held to explain how such a program can enhance student learning. An effective way to get teachers to think about and participate in the program monthly is to set aside a "Skill Day" at the beginning of each month. Prior to the skill day the reading specialist can offer suggestions about integrating the emphasized skill into the existing curriculum. This may be accomplished by a monthly newsletter. On the designated day, all teachers will focus on the skill at least once and include it in their lesson plans. This conscious effort is intended to help teachers remember the skill throughout the remainder of the month and point it out to students at the times when they can benefit from using it. The students should continue to rely on and perfect these skills during the year.

The skills can be addressed by teachers from the first grade on up. The program never encourages the drill of isolated skills. Drills on skills make students compulsive, inflexible, or, in the case of some commercially available kits, more caught up in the trappings of the system than in the content.

Although perfectly suited to the self-contained classroom, "Skill of the Month" works even better for students of team teachers. These students are exposed to the skill not only in different subject areas but also by more than one person. Schoolwide promotion of "Skill of the Month" also lends credibility in the eyes of the students to this use of reading skills.

The following instructional ideas may be used to start a "Skill of the Month" program in an individual elementary school as well as a district. The fact that some skills are not emphasized until the end of the school year does not mean that they should be ignored. This program merely provides a focus as a means of motivating teachers to teach certain skills and of motivating students to use

those skills. The suggested order of skills to be presented is only generally developmental and reflective of the curriculum. A school adopting this program may wish to alter the sequence of presentation or make substitutions of skills which better suit its educational objectives.

1. **August — Recognizing Book Parts.** Providing students with an overview of each of their textbooks is basic to their understanding of how the book itself can help them learn content. The teacher should alert students to the use of boldface type, captions, abbreviations used in the index, etc., as well as the parts of the book. As a class project students could contribute to a book *Our Summer Vacations* and learn about the different functions of a contents page and an index by making their own.

2. **September - Listening.** On the first day of this month all teachers could wear some kind of ridiculous ears. Ears from magazine pictures could be posted throughout the classrooms and hallways. With such exposure students would be constantly reminded of the motto that "listening is not the same as paying attention."

3. **October - Oral Reading.** October is a good month for reading scary stories aloud with expression. Let some of that enthusiasm for both reading aloud and listening (last month's focus) carry over to expository writing. Set aside time to share in reading from each other articles related to subjects covered in the classroom.

4. **November - Following Directions.** On that picture of a turkey which must be found somewhere in each classroom, pin feathers labeled with vocabulary found in written directions: *finish, circle, underline,* etc. Be certain that students know the difference between *row* and *column* in math problems.

5. **December - Sequence.** Discuss word clues for determining sequence of events: *after, before, then, next, to begin with, finally, in conclusion.* As a class project, make a comic strip from a social studies lesson on how milk gets from the cow to your table, for example.

6. **January - Vocabulary.** Review printers' signals such as boldface type and italics. Introduce new vocabulary not only before a reading assignment but also before a movie or field trip.

7. **February - Main Idea.** Beginning with a single sentence and proceeding to paragraphs and sections of a chapter, tell students what you think the main idea is and have them develop reasons why. Review captions (August focus) to determine how they capture the main idea of a picture.

8. **March - Drawing Conclusions.** Fables, which have simple story lines that even a young child can retell, are cunningly sophisticated. Ask children to repeat several fables you have in-

troduced. This review of sequence skills used in storytelling can lead to a discussion of the author's purpose in telling the tale, i.e., the moral or conclusion one draws from these details. Advanced children may wish to write up-beat versions of old fables or create new ones based on familiar adages (e.g., "Look before you leap."). As a matter of course throughout the month, explain to the students that asking themselves "How?" questions helps them draw conclusions about what they read (e.g., "How would you know you are looking at a toad and not a frog?" or "How would better education affect Third World countries?").

9. **April - Study Skills.** The first grade is not too early to stress the importance of listening with pencil in hand. All elementary children can label a notebook page "New to Me" and copy the names of new words, ideas, or labels. Teachers may give some new information simply orally for notetaking to reinforce listening skills talked about last September.

10. **May - Reading Rate.** As an alternative to using a typical book marker for following along as a good reader reads orally, provide transparent markers cut from overhead transparency sheets. Students who occasionally lose their places can see through the marker and more readily catch up.

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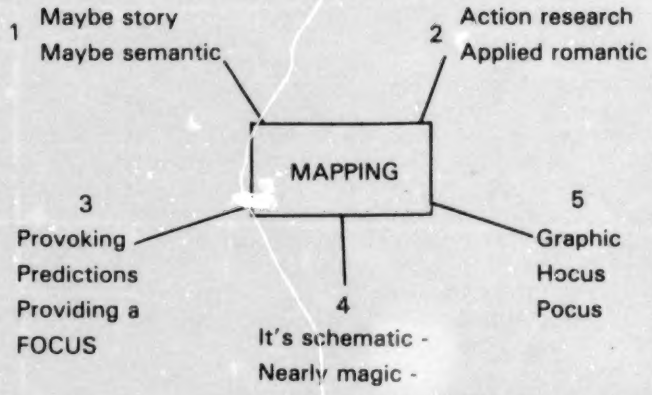
METACOGNITION AND MAPPING: What you see is what you get!

Jim Paprocki
Ashwaubenon School District
Green Bay, Wisconsin

Metaphysical monkeyshines
Evaluate
Thought combines,
Analytic and
Creative tension
Oh my
Goodness — COMPREHENSION!
Naturai, neurological
Instant ignition,
Two sided thinking
Is metacognition.
On going monitoring's a
Normal condition.



HOW TO HOOK YOUR POTENTIAL DROPOUTS DURING SUMMER SCHOOL

Tad Greene, School Psychologist
Mark Marsden, EMR/LD Teacher
Beaver Dam Unified School District
Beaver Dam, Wisconsin

Evolution of the Idea

In the spring of 1982, the Beaver Dam Unified School District identified a need for a summer school program designed to appeal to poorly motivated students who were potential dropouts. The superintendent charged the local school psychologist with the responsibility of setting up this program. This article presents a description of the locally-funded innovative summer school program which was developed in response to this need.

The Basic Skills Program was part of a K-12 initiative to reduce the dropout rate, and was focused on students approaching the junior high age. The program took shape as we spent several weeks discussing this new program with reading teachers, principals, and 5th and 6th grade teachers.

Research on Dropouts

Research by Hammontree (1978), Hewitt and Johnson (1979), and Kowalski and Cangemi (1974) identified characteristics common to most dropouts. These included: low-average intelligence, poor reading ability, low grades, previous retentions, high absenteeism, parents' lack of education, discipline problems, and no extra curricular activities. Dislike of school was universally given as a reason for dropping out in Hewitt and Johnson's study, and most studies found that the majority of dropouts were male. Dee Lloyd (1976) found that many potential dropouts could be identified by sixth grade.

Robbins, Mills, and Clark (1981), Krueger and Parish (1983), and Bakalis (1976) studied alternative programs which have stood the test of time. Bakalis indicated that all fifteen schools in his study agreed that the most important influence in their programs' growth and success was the skill and committment of the teacher. Most teachers were selected by the program director or a program committee. Volunteer students were most likely to succeed in the programs. Key curriculum decisions were made by teachers, and to a lesser extent, by students. Small program size and regular program evaluation enabled changes to be made regularly and without delay.

The Selection Process

Although we only selected 10 students for the program, 21 teachers and 5 principals were involved in defining our needs and

identifying our potential dropouts. This helped generate a broad base of support for the program.

The 10 boys ultimately selected were the type who disliked sitting at a desk completing written assignments and worksheets. Many of them had received very poor grades, and the majority were receiving Chapter I reading help. These youngsters were usually described by their parents and teachers as "tinkerers" who liked working with their hands, and they didn't like school. Because too few girls' names were submitted, and the majority of dropouts from Beaver Dam are boys, it was decided to concentrate on a program geared to what would interest boys. In the spring the boys and their parents were interviewed and invited to participate in the program. All but one of the boys initially interviewed agreed to attend. Because none of those boys had initially registered for regular summer school offerings, it was felt we did successfully identify boys who disliked traditional school activities.

Program Goals

Our goals were to provide the students with enjoyable in-school experiences where various academic skills were used in projects related to their own personal interests. The specific projects were selected after interviewing students and parents, and from the results of a brief homemade interest inventory. (See Appendix A) The following are some of the academic skills and activities included in the units of study:

- reading (newspapers)
- following written directions
- measurement (for carpentry)
- following wiring diagrams (electronics boards)
- math (budgeting and measuring)
- science (electricity and engines)
- spelling (using word processor)
- word processing (on the computer)

The weekly schedule of activities is included in Appendix B.

Staffing

In order to provide the flexible individualized type of program needed, a special education teacher within the school system known for his flexibility and individualized teaching was invited to teach the class that summer. The teacher was given a great amount of freedom in what was to be taught. Extra supervision was provided by a high school senior selected on the basis of grades, extra curricular activities, leadership, and a willingness to work for intrinsic rewards (for free).

Evaluation

1. The program has now been in operation for three summers, and some of the activities have been used by Chapter I teachers.
2. A follow-up study for the fall quarter grades also suggests that 80% of the participants are enjoying varying levels of success passing at least 4 out of 5 academic subjects. If a program such as this can claim some of the credit for this level of successful junior high experiences, we feel it has been successful beyond expectation.
3. Overall attendance was good despite the late night hours many of the students kept. Several students were consistently early. Due to the short duration (6 weeks) of summer school there was no pre and post test data gathering. Rather, students were observed, rated daily, and parents were interviewed. Based on teacher ratings, 80% of the students responded immediately to the program with positive affect, enthusiastic participation, and good attention. Some parent comments were: "He doesn't want to miss one day," "He's running to school," and "It's all he talks about."

In summary, careful selection of students, teachers, volunteers, and curriculum was central to the Basic Skills Program, and a key to its success. The voluntary nature of the students' participation in summer school was another important element directly related to their motivation and learning.

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Appendix A

Interest Inventory

Name _____

I like _____

I am happy when _____

At home _____

I want to know _____

The best thing about school is _____

My greatest success this year has been _____

My worst failure this year has been _____

I hate _____

My favorite TV show is _____

My favorite sports are _____

After school I like to _____

What I did last weekend _____

The best vacation I ever had was _____

My best subject in school is _____

I think that after I finish school I would like to _____

I collect _____

My hobbies are _____

This summer I would like to learn to _____

Next year I would like to learn to _____

When I'm alone I like to _____

When I'm with other kids I like to _____

My favorite movies are _____

If I had three wishes they would be _____

_____

_____

I want to become _____

Name three favorite leisure time activities _____

_____

_____

Appendix B

Sample Schedule of Activities for Basic Skills Class
8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
Summer 1984

Week 1

A. Newspaper Unit
   1. Reading
   2. Field trip to *Daily Citizen*
   3. Reading advertisements.
   4. Developing a student-designed sports page on word processor

B. Small Appliance Repair
   1. Diagnosing problems
   2. Remediating problems
      a. Soldering broken wires
      b. Rewiring appliance
      c. Cleaning and lubing tape recorders
      d. Cleaning gears in appliances
      e. Replacing switches
      f. Replacing wire leads

Week 2

A. Small Engine Repair
   1. Science
   2. Mechanics
   3. Reading and interpreting diagrams

B. Small Engine Repair Activities
   1. Break down engines
   2. Change oil
   3. Sharpen lawn mower blades
   4. Repair carburetor
   5. Replace throttle control
   6. Repair mini-bike motor
   7. Replace points, plugs, condensor in mowers

Week 3

A. Bike Maintenance
   1. Reading manuals
   2. Applied science
   3. Mechanics
   4. Replacing tires
   5. Bearing replacement
   6. Standing and painting of frames

B. Small Engines (continued)
    1. Auto - oil changes and lube

Week 4

A. Woodworking
    1. Build birdhouses, birdfeeders and bookshelves
    2. Library trip to find books with various birdhouse designs
    3. Design choice, lay out, cutting, assembly, and staining

Week 5

A. Model Construction
    1. Field trip to store to purchase materials
    2. Reading directions
    3. Individual model painting and assembly

Week 6

A. Woodworking (continued)

B. Computers
    1. Basic instructions, following directions
    2. Following a computer program
    3. Computer logic

C. Electronics Boards
    1. Wiring diagrams
    2. Electronic experiments.

IN-CLASS REMEDIAL INSTRUCTION: AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE PULL-OUT PROGRAMS

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Remedial reading programs are as varied as the students they serve. Chapter I programs, reading labs, clinics, separate reading classes, and tutor programs all aim to provide reading instruction beyond what the regular classroom and content teacher can give. Much data exists to support the effectiveness of each of these remedial programs and each has its own advantages. But despite the documented success of these programs, most have one notable disadvantage. To receive special help, the student must be removed from the regular classroom and teacher. The pull-out program is the norm for remedial reading instruction today.

In the typical Chapter I program, for example, a student reports to the reading classroom for anywhere from thirty to sixty mintues. A reading professional provides instruction that will help students to better comprehend content materials. The transfer of skills taught in the reading room to the content classroom is the primary goal.

Unfortunately, this goal is not always met because the separation of the student from the content room also means the separation of the reading teacher from the content teacher. As Smith, Otto, and Hansen (1978) explain in a discussion of remedial reading classes, "because instruction...is isolated from the rest of the instructional program, it is often difficult for students to see any relationship between their learning to read and the demands that are being placed on them to read in other classes." (p. 144)

Although a desired objective, close consultation between the reading teacher and the content teacher is infrequent or nonexistent. A lack of knowledge about what is taught in the reading room is a common complaint of content teachers.

To provide a remedial reading service to upper elementary students (grades 4, 5, 6) that involves regular consultation with the content teacher, the New London School District developed an in-classroom remedial reading program. The program consists of two remedial reading teachers who work with teachers and students in the district's four elementary schools. The reading teachers meet daily with the students who are targeted for the remedial service. Appropriate diagnostic tests plus teacher referrals are used to select students for the program. All remedial instruction is provided within the regular content classrooms. The reading teachers, and not the students, travel from room to room. A small table in the back of the regular classroom, or a chair next to the student's own desk is the reading teacher's "classroom."

One-to-one instruction is used and the student's content materials and texts frequently become the reading text as well. Instruction is individualized and emphasis is placed on viewing reading as a means for learning.

Although the program is still being studied to fully measure its effectiveness, comments from the content teachers indicate an overwhelming approval of this in-class approach. All agree that they are definitely kept informed about what help their students are receiving from the reading professional. As one fifth grade teacher wrote, help is provided "without any interference or interruption of the regular class in session. Reading instruction is given with the materials and skills the child used that day. This provides immediate clarification and support for what the child missed earlier and, therefore, the child is more ready to meet the next day's class."

As with any educational program, there are several disadvantages to this in-class remedial approach. First, because the reading teachers move from room to room, (and in New London also from building to building), the reading teacher must be highly organized and flexible enough to work well in several teaching environments. A reading professional who needs the security of the self-contained classroom would encounter numerous problems. Second, because the reading teacher sees the content teachers daily and works directly within their classroom, he/she must possess the personality and diplomacy for working closely with colleagues. Third, and perhaps most significantly, a program of this nature must be locally funded. Because state or federal aides do not exist for such a remedial service, many local school boards may be reluctant to pay for the complete cost of the program.

But as the teachers, students, and parents of our district have learned, the advantages of this unusual program outweigh the disadvantages. Content teachers see first hand what help the remedial teacher provides. Students learn that reading has meaning for all subjects, not just for reading class. And with the trend today to promote reading in the content areas along with individual attention in reading instruction, the in-class remedial approach may prove to be the most successful.

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AN INTERVIEW WITH CAROL SANTA
Kalispell, Montana

Doug Beuhl
Madison East High School
Madison, Wisconsin

Carol Santa is the director of th reading and writing project for the Kalispell (Montana) Public Schools. Her leadership in working with junior and senior high teachers has led to the development of the Content Reading in Secondary Schools (CRISS) Project in Kalispell. Dr. Santa is the author of numerous articles on content reading and has been a frequent presenter of workshops throughout the United States. She has recently conducted such workshops in Wisconsin in Milwaukee, LaCrosse, Green Bay and at the 1985 WSRA Spring Conference at Oconomowoc. Dr. Santa was recently elected to the IRA Board of Directors.

The following interview was conducted by Doug Beuhl of Madison East High School in December 1984.

Reading specialists usually find that the most difficult level to build a reading program in a school system is on the secondary level. How do you go about getting a content reading program started? I guess I should ask, how did you start your CRISS (Content Reading in Secondary Schools) program in Kalispell?

Our program arose from teacher frustration. They were concerned because their students were learning practically nothing from their reading assignments. Several teachers approached our district's curriculum coordinator who wrote a Title IV-C grant for developing a program which would help our students learn more from their texts. I was hired to work with the teachers in developing the project.

We began small. For the first year I worked with eight teachers who volunteered from the content areas of social studies, language arts, mathematics and science. These teachers, who happened to be among the most innovative in our high school, were well respected by all aspects of the educational community. They had five days of release time to work with me in developing the project.

The summer before we began developing the project, we attended a week-long inservice under the direction of Bob Pavlik in Greeley, Colorado. This was followed by another week of inservice conducted in Kalispell by several professors from the Center for the Study of Reading. From then on we were on our own.

What philosophy would you say undergirded your project?

Our theoretical base came from some recent work in cognitive psychology which we translated into a workable instructional philosophy. Basically, we wanted our students to become more active, and be more involved in their own learning. We also saw the need to spend more time before students read in generating and developing background knowledge appropriate to the upcoming assignment. Next, we wanted instruction to be direct. We no longer took anything for granted. For example, if we wanted our students to read and study a particular assignment, we taught them how to do so directly as part of content instruction. We no longer assumed that our students could pick up reading and studying strategies just through practice.

What are the basic elements of your project in Kalispell?

The project has six components. The first is **text analysis** where we focus on how the organization of text affects learning. This includes an analysis of the content and organization of text along with specific ideas for teaching students how to use text structure for learning content. Second, is **student assessment.** Teachers have developed informal student assessments for evaluating their students' abilities to read and study from their text. The next four sections, main ideas, learning and writing strategies, vocabulary and the directed reading activity focus on specific **instructional strategies**, the third component. The main idea section involves procedures for directly teaching main ideas through reciprocal teaching, underlining, conceptual mapping and summarizing. The fourth component, **learning guides** is the area which has affected our teaching the most. This component encompasses direct instruction in a variety of strategies for helping students organize text information for learning. This also involves a writing component. The fifth section is **vocabulary development** and the sixth is an **overall model for teaching reading in the content areas.** This model is basically a directed reading activity which links prereading, reading and post reading activities into an overall instructional approach.

Much of what you say involves the direct instruction of skills rather than a situation where students infer what the skill is and what they are supposed to do with it. How do teachers go about directly teaching study skills?

One approach is for the teacher to model how she or he would read and study from a selection. For example, the teacher would read a short selection in history and talk about how she understood the main points. She thinks aloud while reading so that students can understand the thinking processes leading to success. Or if the lesson happens to be on notetaking, the teacher may choose to have her students generate rules for taking notes

before they read, and then instruct them to apply these rules to the upcoming lesson. Afterwards, they may put samples of their notes on the board for discussion, not only about the content, but also about the process of taking notes.

I like your description of how you work with teachers on directly teaching what it is they want students to be able to do. What occurs to me is that getting teachers to work extensively on developing the behaviors you describe invariably means that they are going to have to cover less of their valued content. How do we convince teachers that this is a worthwhile trade off?

This is a question that we are often asked, and it can be a problem for content teachers. However, we have learned in Kalispell that we actually do cover about the same amount of content as we did before beginning this project. At first, teaching students the process of learning as part of content instruction, does slow down the amount of content that is covered. However, once students learn specific strategies for reading, studying, and writing about text information, they are able to learn more content. Students can actually learn from their reading which means that teachers are free to go beyond the text and embellish with additional information.

How do you achieve reinforcement across content boundaries in a secondary school? Very often the problem is that students will apply a skill in one area, but then it will not transfer to another area.

While there will be some transfer, students often have difficulty modifying processes for different content areas. Therefore, it is important to involve teachers from different content areas so that students are "hit" from many different angles.

In Kalispell about 70 percent of our junior high and high school staff are actively involved in the project. Because our teachers are working from a common instructional philosophy and share a common process vocabulary, transfer is not a problem. However, it has taken us a long time to get to this point.

There is something else I would like to ask you. I am fascinated by the term "teachers as collaborative researchers." What do you mean by that term and how has it worked in your system?

We evaluated instructional strategies by conducting a series of investigations in our classrooms. We set up simple experiments where teachers would cover the same content, but present it differently. We would then give the same examination to both classes and determine if the strategies differentially influenced student learning. The instructional procedures which led to improved learning were incorporated within the project.

We had informal research chats during lunch and after school where teachers presented their results to one another. Involving

teachers in research turned out to be a very convincing way to create changes in instruction; and it also created teacher ownership.

Once you have started a program and got it off the ground, how do you keep teachers' enthusiasm and interest going? How do you keep them interested in receiving new ideas and have these new ideas make their way to the staff?

As I visit classes in the district, I collect ideas which I summarize in a newsletter which is then sent out to all the staff. I make sure that teachers are credited for their ideas in the newsletter. My district also encourages teachers to attend conferences, particularily if they are giving presentations. Even though we are a poor district, our Board and school administrators make sure that there is money set aside to send teachers to state, regional and national conferences. Not only will our teachers return home with new ideas, but they will be "fired up" due to their presentations. The teachers are then asked to share ideas from the conferences with other staff.

We also like our teachers to give a limited number of workshops for other districts. When we are asked to work with large districts, I like to send two or three teachers representing different content areas. Not only do they do a terrific job, but they return home rejuvenated.

Finally, I have an on going graduate seminar where teachers receive graduate credit for writing articles for publication in journals. We meet once a month for two hours after school as an editing group, where we read one another's drafts and make suggestions for revisions. Having ideas published in a journal is a wonderful motivator. So far the group has done well in getting articles published in a variety of applied journals.

If I can back up a step here, you mentioned earlier in the interview that the major goal of your program is to get kids to be active learners. Could you describe some specific study strategies students are taught that help them be active learners?

Students learn how to use the organization of text to extract main ideas through summarizing, selective underlining and conceptual mapping. Once students have some facility in pulling main ideas from text, we introduce them to a variety of notetaking procedures.

Our favorite is a simple two column format. In the left hand column students write key words summarizing the main points. On the right hand side, they write down the details describing these points. When studying, students cover the information on the right and use the key words on the left to test themselves. We find that if students actually use this notetaking procedure, they do better on our tests. Although this procedure has been around for a

long time, we have adopted it and call it the *Montana Plan for Studying*. I hear from several sources that it has also been adopted by several Wisconsin schools and renamed the *Wisconsin Plan for Studying*. I think that's terrific!

One thing that really impressed me when looking over your materials is the approach to writing that you use throughout your curriculum. Would you care to comment on this?

Writing is one of the most active strategies we have for learning content. The most beneficial writing-to-learn activities are informal, frequent and course related. Having students keep content journals where they summarize information, write explanations and practice essay examinations works well. Longer, more formal assignments are also an important part of the project. Our English faculty has taken an active role in helping content teachers develop and evaluate these more formal assignments.

You have been doing a number of workshops throughout the country. What shape do you think secondary reading is in today? We certainly have heard a lot of critical comments from national education reports. What do you see happening in secondary reading today?

I see some real changes being made. Reading instruction is no longer being relegated to English classes, reading labs and Chapter I programs. I am beginning to see a change in teachers' conception of their roles as teachers. Many content teachers feel much more responsible for teaching studying and writing as part of their content instruction. This change is going to continue to escalate as teachers see that this emphasis works. Students are less frustrated which makes teaching far more rewarding for everyone.

One word of caution though - I only see this shift in philosophy where a district is committed to change. It takes time, money and lots of hard work. Even though we are off and running in Kalispell, we continue to need support.

Your description of the program sounds like one that really needs someone who is an advocate of that approach and who is available and is responsible that things happen. How do you see that person's role in a secondary school?

You are right. The program won't work unless someone has responsibility to oversee a project such as this. In my own district I am called a facilitator. I am not an administrator, and fortunately, am not involved in formal teacher evaluation. My function is to energize and keep things rolling. I don't have any students of my own, but I do adopt classes for demonstration teaching purposes.

The reading specialist in a high school or junior high is the

logical person to take on this role. This means of course that this individual would be given time to work with teachers a good portion of the day. This person must also feel comfortable doing demonstrations in content classrooms, writing newsletters and conducting inservices for teachers and administrators. It takes an energetic self-confident individual, who is willing to keep plugging away. It is probably the most important position in a secondary school. I think my biases are showing. My final comment is that if given a chance we reading people can make a difference. I find that terribly exciting.

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Volume 30, Number 2	Theme: **Integrating Reading and Language Arts** Deadline: September 1, 1985
Volume 30, Number 3	Theme: **Effecting Change in Reading Programs** Deadline: January 1, 1986
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THE CLASSROOM TEACHER AS AN ACTION RESEARCHER: THE ROLL OF READING DURING READING CLASS

Mary Jett-Simpson
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

"Up and down the row we go. You read until I say whoa!"

"Round Robin" reading has been a tradition in American schools for some time. To provide opportunities for children to practice their reading and for teachers to check their word pronunciation, the reading groups assemble in turn around the teacher as each child reads a paragraph or so aloud. The tradition is so strong that many young children don't think they have had reading for the day unless they read to the teacher in this fashion.

In "Round Robin" reading, the child doing the reading is the only person we can be certain is getting the practice. Although teachers often say that the listeners are following along to get repetitive practice to strengthen their own reading, often the children are trying to follow the reading of a child who reads worse than they do or they are skipping ahead in the story or focusing their attention on some exciting daydream, or looking for opportunities to create a bit of mischief through their boredom. We have all been there - in the middle of the read aloud group where it seems that the children are doing little more than "barking at print" and keeping order is the paramount concern.

The purposes of this article are to discuss the amount of reading done individually in regular and remedial classrooms and to explore how oral reading can be used more effectively to support the learning-to-read process.

How much reading does the individual child do during the reading period?

The amount of time first, second and third grade children actually spent reading at the sentence level and beyond during teacher directed basal lessons was observed by Gambrell (1984). During the average 27 minute lesson period the overall picture of contextual reading for the first grade was a total of 2 mintues of silent reading broken into two segments of around 1 minute each, and one-half minute each for individual oral reading and choral reading. The first grade child, then was engaged in individual reading for about 3 minutes of the reading period. Second grade children spent 4 minutes in silent reading and the third graders spent 5½ minutes. Second and third grade children spent about ¼ minute reading orally and there was no choral reading. In addition when teachers sent the students to their seats to do independent seatwork, *none* of the teachers assigned them to read from the basal reader. In another study, (Gambrell et al. 1981) the amount of time teachers gave to reading in the high and low

reading was observed. 57% of the time was given to contextual reading in good reader groups but only 22% of the time was allocated for the poor readers. More time was given to letter-sound association instruction in the poor reader groups. Allington (1977) found a similar pattern in remedial classrooms. In summary, there wasn't much reading going on during reading class. When there was reading, the good readers were allowed to do far more than the poor readers. The time spent with the poor readers was given to phonics discussions. So those students who could already do it, were given more time to read and those who needed the practice read very little.

How much time do your students read individually during reading class?

To begin the action research about oral and silent reading in your classroom, you will need to evaluate how much time your students read individually during reading class. Remember to play fair with yourself by doing the week's reading instruction following the same patterns as you usually do. No one else will know the results of your personal survey unless you elect to share them. You can use the chart in Figure 1 to organize the information. Time the number of minutes or parts of minutes *each* student reads orally and silently beyond the sentence level in each reading group; high, middle, and low. You might want to borrow a stop watch from the physical education teacher to make the timing easier and more exact. Find the average time for individuals in each group and enter that number in the appropriate box on the chart. At the end of the week, find the average number of minutes for each group. Collect the information for the two parts of the reading period; for the time you meet with the groups and during independent seatwork time. Since you will typically be busy with teaching during the independent seatwork time, you will probably need help in making these observations.

Next, look at the independent work period in broader terms. How are you distributing the activities for this time? How much time for reading, writing (not including filling in blanks), workbooks, and worksheets? As a guideline, Osbourn (1985) suggests that no more than one-fourth of the reading period be given to workbook work so that more time can be spent reading. By redistributing the activities during independent seatwork time, you can gain time for reading.

The Role of Reading During Reading Class

Reading whole text allows students to integrate the skills they only practice in isolation on workbook pages. As the students integrate their knowledge of semantics, syntax and grapho-phonemics, they move toward automatic processing. To become fluent readers, they must progress to the stage of automaticity.

FIGURE 1

Average *Individual* Oral and Silent Reading Times

	Monday	Tuesday	Weds	Thursday	Friday	Average Min. for the Week
	H M L	H M L	H M L	H M L	H M L	H M L
1. No. of Min. spent reading orally						
2. No. of Min. spent reading silently						

"According to automaticity theory, a fluent reader decodes text automatically -- that is without attention -- thus leaving attention free to be used for comprehension. Beginning readers on the other hand, are nonautomatic in their decoding since attention is required. Because attention is on decoding, it is not immediately available for comprehension, thus making the process of deriving meaning more difficult and slower" (Samuels, 1979, p. 406).

Basketball players don't get ready for an exhibition game just by practicing dribbles. Musicians don't prepare for concerts only by playing scales. Athletes and musicians do their skill drills but also spend a great deal of time playing practice games and complete pieces of music. It stands to reason that if readers are going to have a chance to become proficient, they have to have time to practice reading whole texts. Richard Allington said it quite directly in the title of one of his articles: "If they don't read much, how they ever gonna get good?"

Including Reading as Part of Your Reading Class

Silent Reading

I will only briefly discuss silent reading, since the major strategy I wish to share with you in this article is for oral reading.

A sizeable amount of the reading practice should be silent reading of easy, high success materials. High progress readers have been found to spend most of their time reading easy materials (Berliners, 1981). Poor readers, in particular, seldom are given materials that fit the high success definition. Allington suggests 96% accuracy as a definition of easy materials (1983).

Initially poor readers and beginning readers may need guidance in silent reading behaviors. Stauffer's Directed Reading Thinking Activity (1969) is a good strategy for teachers to use as a framework for guiding successful silent reading. In the strategy, the readers are guided to (1) predict what will happen in the story;

(2) silently read a page or so; (3) prove or disprove their predictions; (4) then predict again - repeating the cycle until they complete their reading. The teacher gradually fades the amount of guidance until the students are able to direct their own reading and thinking. (Note: As all of you who are primary grade teachers know, beginning readers usually don't read silently when given time to read independently. They read aloud to themselves. Even though their "silent" reading is orally to themselves, they still need that independent practice.)

Oral Reading

Repeated Readings: Oral reading practice is appropriate for beginning readers and poor readers who have not reached the stage of automaticity or reading speeds of around 85 words per minute (Samuels, 1979). The speed indicates that the students are processing the words at a rate approaching automaticity.

We are not only interested in providing opportunities for developing fluency through the oral reading but in developing self-correction strategies as well. Readers need to constantly monitor the sense-making of their reading in order to become fluent. This is evidenced by self-corrections of reading miscues that change the meaning of the sentence or passage.

Several researchers have successfully used a variety of repeated reading strategies which have resulted in improved fluency and indications of enhanced comprehension (Chomsky, 1976; Samuels, 1979; Blum and Koskinen, 1982). Repeated readings, the procedure in common across these studies, involves rereading a short (50-200 words), meaningful passage several times until a satisfactory level of fluency is reached. The procedure is then repeated with a new passage on successive days.

In a recent paper, Koskinen and Blum (1984), had third grade students work in partners doing repeated readings with positive results. The third graders became more fluent and made significantly fewer miscues that didn't make sense in the sentence. The procedure they used is described here for you to field test in your classrooms. Teachers in the study conducted three half-hour training sessions which consisted of the following steps.

1. **Session One - Introduction:** The students worked with partners. Each partner chose a part of a basal story to read that was about 50 words long. They read their passages silently. Then one partner reads the passage aloud three times. After each oral reading, the reader answered the question "How well did you read?" on a sheet of paper. The other partner did the same. This was followed by group discussions about their observations.

2. **Session Two - Supervised Practice and How to be a Good Partner**: The partners did the same as before with the following modification. The listening partner complimented the reading partner on how s/he had improved after the second and third readings The listener also wrote his/her observations in answer to the question "How did your partner get better?" Discussion followed.

3. **Session Three**: This session combined the activities of sessions one and two to comprise the complete procedure.

In the study, students did the repeated readings procedure for 15-minute periods three times a week for five weeks with positive results. This appears to be a very workable time frame for including the procedure in the classroom context. Obviously, repeated readings should only be continued as long as students need this kind of practice to assist them in developing automaticity.

There is one modification of the procedure you might also like to try. During stage two, you could have the listener say "check" at the **end** of sentences where the reader makes a miscue that changes the meaning of the sentence which s/he does not correct independently. Waiting until the end of the sentence allows the reader more opportunity to use the sense of the sentence to guide a self-correction. Some readers need a little cueing to help them move toward self correction. "Check" would cue them that they need to reread the sentence so that it makes sense. The point of view to develop with the listener is that s/he is helping the reader make sense of the passage. It is important **not** to talk about this as a procedure for trying to catch your partner making mistakes. Approaching it this way emphasizes the positive.

Although the study was done with third graders, there are a number of first grade teachers I have been working with who have been successful with it. They also report that their children like to do it. Some of them are having the children make recordings of their first and last readings and replay them to hear how they improved. This is a very positive way to give feedback. The children like to hear themselves sounding good.

Partner Reading: A way to let the children practice their oral reading informally is to let them do partner reading. I suggest that they do this *after* they have had an opportunity to read the selection to themselves. Children work in partners taking turns reading parts of the story. In some classrooms, children can do this during independent seatwork time. In other classrooms, teachers may feel more comfortable circulating among the partners to informally monitor the reading. In partner reading, the listening partner gives the same kind of positive support as with repeated readings. In particular, the "check" system should be included.

Meaningful Group Oral Reading: Meaningful oral reading can be part of the group experience. There are several situations that make oral reading more meaningful than simply reading around the circle. First is a listening situation. That is where the reader is the only one with the text and the group members are listening to hear the message. For example, you could have the students bring their library books to reading class on a regular basis to read a short teaser from their book illustrating a favorite part. Second is to demonstrate comprehension of some part of the passage by proving a point or expressing an individual point of view. Examples are reading the part that proves your statement, reading the part that gives the best clues to the mystery, reading the part that makes the best picture of the setting. Third, is for entertainment such as preparation of a play or choral reading where the readers practice before the performance to make the best interpretive reading. In each situation, the students have read the material to themselves first.

"I hope you enjoy exploring ways to put reading back in the reading class."

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RESEARCH UPDATE: SUMMARIZING TEXT

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Content area teachers in search of a strategy for helping students to comprehend text should look at the research on summarizing. This seemingly simple skill is one which most high school students find difficult. Yet, when properly taught, summarizing can become an important learning strategy.

Recently, a great deal of research has been done in the area of text summarization. Much of the current research has been sparked by the work of Kintsch and van Dijk (1978) and Meyer (1984) who divided the structure of text into four levels: *macropropositions,* or main ideas, and three levels of *micropropositions,* or supporting details. Meyer, Brandt, and Bluth (1980) found that good readers who are asked to summarize material are more likely to include macropropositions and higher level micropropositions in their summaries. Poor readers are more likely to randomly select specific details, ignoring main ideas. Winograd (1984) found that poor readers tend to insert personal information rather than information gained from the text. In addition these researchers suggest that the ability to use top-level structure develops with age.

Hahn and Garner (1985) identify six skills required for summarization. Students must be able to:

1. Ferret out trivial material.
2. Delete repetitious material.
3. Substitute a general term for a list of specific items.
4. Combine a list of actions into a broader, single action.
5. Select a topic sentence.
6. Create a topic sentence.

They concluded that younger students are able to perform skills 1 and 2, high school students can do skills 3 through 5, and all students have difficulty with skill 6. Younger students can generally identify important ideas. but are able to write only brief summaries. Older students are better at paraphrasing, and are better able to plan ahead how to write summaries.

Ann Brown, from the Center for the Study of Reading, has done extensive research on the ability to summarize (see Brown, Campione, and Day, 1981; Brown, Day and Jones, 1983; and Brown and Day, 1983). She has investigated three areas of summarization: the age levels that students develop summarization skills; the ability to use rules when asked to write a summary using a specified number of words; and the ability to plan ahead. In one experiment, Brown and Day (1983) gave students in grades 5, 6, 10 and college two passages, and asked them to read the texts

three times and write what they thought was a good summary of the passages. They were then asked to write a 60 word summary of the same material. Fifth graders were able to delete trivial and repetitious material. Older students were able to perform most of the higher level summarization rules, although none of the groupt cogld create a satisfactory topic sentence.

Garner and Hahn (1983) found further age differences among elementary school students when they asked students in grades 2, 4, and 6 to rate summaries written by the researchers. While 4th and 6th graders could generally recognize good summaries, 2nd graders tended to select "bad" summaries that contained only low-importance information.

The evidence indicates that poor readers and younger students cannot summarize effectively. The obvious question is, How can summarization be taught? Chou Hare and Borchardt (1984) sought to answer that question for readers who were low-income, minority high school students. Using direct instruction to teach students how to summarize, Chou Hare and Borchardt were able to teach students efficient summarization techniques. They taught four general steps for writing a summary:

1. Make sure you understand the text. Ask yourself "What was this text about?"
2. Look back. Reread to make sure you got the theme right.
3. Rethink. Reread each paragraph and try to say the theme of that paragraph to yourself.
4. Check and double check. Did you repeat yourself? Did you skip anything? Is all the important information in the summary?

They also gave four rules for writing a summary:

1. Collapse lists. If there is a list try to think of a word or phrase name for the whole list.
2. Use topic sentences. If you don't see a topic sentence, make up one of your own.
3. Get rid of unnecessary details. Don't repeat yourself, or include unnecessary details.
4. Collapse paragraphs. Decide which paragraphs should be kept or eliminated, and which might be joined.

And they give one final suggestion:

Polish the summary. Reread the summary and make adjustments to make it sound more natural.

Chou Hare and Borchardt concluded that high school students can learn to summarize effectively if they are directly taught how.

Hahn and Garner (1985) suggest teaching summarization skills in three phases: recognizing a good text summary, writing text sum-

maries, and assessing the efficiency of written summaries. They suggest creating good, average and poor summaries, and having students state why a summary is good or poor. Another technique suggested by Bob Pavlik is to have students examine the summaries contained in their textbooks, and locate the page and paragraph(s) where the information is found. This will help students to see how the actual material is reduced by the authors.

Writing text summaries need not be as tedious or boring as it sounds. Once students have been directly taught how to write summaries, following Chou Hare and Borchardt, they can try their hand at their own and compare them to the author's or their teacher's summaries. Group-written or edited summaries can foster the idea of cooperation. And teachers can play around with purpose, audience, and form, having students write a letter to a person from another country (planet), explaining the main ideas to a younger sibling, condensing the material for an advertisement for a book jacket, or a newspaper review. Text summaries could be allowed in exams, which would provide motivation, and help students see the true purpose of being able to write effective summaries.

And what is the purpose? Students should understand that the ability to summarize is essential to understanding and remembering what they read and learn. No one can remember everything he or she reads. One can only remember an abstraction of that material, and that abstraction can best be written down in a summary. The ability to write an efficient summary is essential to good comprehension. Even when they are not writing summaries, students should be making mental summaries as they read.

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GRAPHIC AIDS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE TO THE REMEDIAL READER

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Many high school students with limited reading ability have become dependent upon others, teachers or friends, to identify for them what they should know from their textbook assignments.

This ability need not remain undeveloped in less able learners if they are alerted to the importance and use of external organization, graphic aids, which appears in most expository texts. These aids include tables of contents, indexes, appendices, chapter headings, divisions of information as shown by distinctive type, maps, charts, pictures, graphs, etc. It is from these aids that students can gain insight into the priorities authors have placed on ideas in the information presented. A survey of several graphic aids used within a lengthy selection can also provide a capsule view of the intent and direction an author's words will take without requiring extensive reading on the part of the less able reader.

Some of the graphic clues with examples, that indicate the author's priorities concerning what's important in his/her materials include:

1. **Sub-Titles**

The night had become one of strange sounds and eerie moon-lit shapes.

BROTHER SEBASTIAN'S GARDEN

"I tell you he came this way." "If he did, then why can't the dogs track him?"

The **sub-title**, Brother Sebastian's Garden, is free-standing and, because of its location on the page and spacing, of obvious importance. This place of prominence on a page is something that even young children understand quite naturally. It's a part of their early art work, for that which is important to them usually occupies a central position in their pictures. But, care should be taken by the teacher in the selection of materials with **sub-titles** when they are to be used for the purpose of identifying the author's concepts, particularly if this appears to be a new skill. Initially, the words should be interpreted at the literal level of comprehension and not permit the inference of ideas that go beyond the printed page.

2. **Side Heads**

They knew that this church had the right to protect a

person in trouble.

THE CHURCH

The main door of the church had a brass knocker, but Rand could not reach it.

The paragraph **side-head,** The Church, which relates to the subtitle, indicates an item that is included in the main theme but of lesser importance. The function of the paragraph **side-head** then is to limit the concept to be studied. It is positioned on the left side of the printed page and can be free-standing or underlined as a part of a line of print.

3. **Italicized Words**

...There are many kinds of nerve cells. The *sensory* nerve cells sense light, sound, and pressure. They also sense chemicals connected with smells. *Motor* nerve cells carry messages from the brain or spinal cord to the muscles. They cause the muscles to move. *Connecting* nerve cells link the sensory nerve cells with the motor nerve cells.

Within the body of a paragraph, the author often highlights the importance of special items by placing them in **italics,** such as *sensory, motor, and connecting.* If this same paragraph is introduced with a side-head, the italicized terms often comprise the supporting ideas. Authors who employ this device usually provide strong context clues so that these special terms are given meaning along with their graphic distinctiveness.

4. **Underlined Words or Phrases**

There was little manufacturing as we know it today in the Middle Ages.

There were some craftsmen who produced and worked with metals - irons, steel, gold and silver. Other craftsmen tanned and worked with leather. During the latter part of the period, the number of people engaged in the cloth-making industry began to increase.

Underlined words or **phrases** indicate a technique used by authors to identify the main ideas in their presentations, such as, **There was little manufacturing as we know it today in the Middle Ages.** This device saves the remedial reader a great deal of time. He/she need not guess at what the key concepts are for they have already been identified.

5. **Abbreviations in Parentheses**

In terms of resources, water is assuming an elevated position among our own natural resources in Wisconsin. In

fact, western states have proposed the purchase of water from lakes Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie and Superior (HOMES) as a step towards meeting the needs of their own growing population.

Some authors use abbreviations to condense terms or phrases that are to be used repeatedly throughout the content of their material. Note the abbreviation, or acronym in this case, to encompass the names of the Great Lakes. The abbreviation also indicates the importance the author places on the term and the frequency with which it will be used or he/she would not make a special effort towards brevity.

6. **Dictionary Re-Spellings in Parentheses**

...Today, the people of England belong to many different churches. Yet, England still has a state church headed by a monarch. This is the Protestant (prot'is tənt) Episcopal (i pis'k pl) Church.

Dictionary respellings, often enclosed in parentheses, suggest the importance an author places upon selected vocabulary. The author suggests, because of the respelling of Protestant and Episcopal, that here are words of significant importance to my discussion and I want you to be able to recognize and pronounce them. Context clues to meaning are usually strong with this type of graphic aid.

7. **Quotations**

...There is such a thing as "bait" advertising. The advertiser states that he is selling an article at a greatly reduced price.

Quotation marks, as used with "bait" advertising, can also suggest importance. Their use by an author alerts the reader to a special meaning of a word or a short term. Sometimes the interpretation will be unique and employed throughout the discussion.

8. **Words of Explanation in Parentheses**

There are laws that protect the Englishman's rights and privileges. Laws, detectives, and policemen (called "bobbies") protect the people.

Graphic aids are often used as a device to indicate added information. Explanations are commonly handled in this way through the use of **parentheses**, e.g. **(bobbies)** following policeman, and are frequently used in social studies to bridge a gap between the language of one country and its counterpart in another.

9. **Asterisks**

...He was the ruler of the grasslands. He often fought fierce animals, and won. Other animals feared him. However, one day something surprising happened. Read the following selection and find out what it was.

TWO-LEGGED WHIRLWIND*

The ostrich sat very quietly in the sand, his huge legs folded under him. His long and slender neck curved upward to a great height.

*From the book, LIONS ON THE PROWL by Clayton J. Falbru. Reprinted by permission of the...

Like parenthesis, the **asterisk** indicates additional information. It can direct the reader to a footnote providing an explanation or indicate a source from which material was obtained, as noted in the title **Two-Legged Whirlwind.** By the former use, the author shows the reader that a special importance is attached to the word or term and that a clear understanding is needed.

Summary

Students with limited reading ability who acquire competence in using these guide posts can approach their textbook assignments with greater efficiency.

Furthermore, through an awareness of the purpose of graphic aids, students will be more secure in knowing that they have the ideas, relationships and terms identified in the text which are considered to be important from the author's point of view.

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SOFTWARE REVIEW

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MICROSPEEDREAD, By Gail Benchener, Rose Wassman, and James Lucas. Greenwich, CT: CBS Software, 1984. For Apple II, Commodore 64, and IBM-PC systems. US $125.00.

SPEED READER II, By Janice Davidson and Richard Eckert Jr. Rancho Palos Verdes, CA: Davidson and Associates, 1983. For Apple II, Commodore 64, and IBM-PC systems. US $69.95.

As reading educators become more familiar with educational software and are able to study the relative effectiveness of various approaches to using this advanced technology, one area of study will have to be that of speed reading instruction and practice. The two programs that are the subject of this review present two very different approaches to the manner in which educational software and the microcomputer are used for instruction and practice in speed reading.

MicroSpeedRead essentially uses its computer software to teach speed reading, skimming, and scanning techniques to the learner. It utilizes a *User's Manual to Accompany MicroSpeedRead* to practice speed reading using twenty-nine reading selections. The computer is used to calculate reading speed, check comprehension, and record results. The four diskettes in this program lead the learner through a series of ten lessons. Lesson 1 begins by determining a base reading rate, a pushing rate (where you try to read faster than your base rate), a skimming rate, and a scanning rate. In this pretest lesson, the actual reading is done out of the manual and not on the computer. The learner begins reading when told to begin and presses the space bar on the computer when the practice article is completed. The software program uses the microcomputer to calculate the reading speed in words per minute. After each reading passage is completed, five multiple-choice questions are answered on the computer to check comprehension. Reading speed and comprehension scores for each practice reading are temporarily stored in a record-keeping section of the program.

Lesson 2 provides some theory behind speed reading but no speed reading practice. Lessons 3, 4, and 5 introduce the learner to the speed reading techniques of "idea clustering", "line pacing", and "Z-pattern and S-pattern pacing". Examples of how these techniques aid in speed reading are shown graphically on the computer screen and then practiced once using the computer. Each technique is then practiced several more times by reading selections from the manual. Multiple-choice comprehension checks are completed after each practice article. During these

lessons, the computer is used to determine reading speed and the level of comprehension.

The techniques of "Z-pattern and S-pattern pacing" are further applied in lesson 6 on the "survey" portion of the SQ3R procedure. More practice in skimming to prepare for reading is covered in lesson 7. Lesson 8 provides practice in scanning for information. Given a question, the learner scans an article in the manual until the answer is found and the space bar on the computer is pressed. At this point, the computer gives the scanning time.

Lesson 9 provides no additional practice articles but offers some suggestions for further speed reading practice in using the learner's personal source of reading materials. The lesson also explains "The Page Timer," a feature which the learner can use to measure reading speed when practicing on these materials. The final lesson is a post test of pushing, skimming, and scanning rates.

Speed Reader II contrasts the instructional approach taken by *MicroSpeedRead* by using its software to provide speed reading practice. The computer is used to control both the amount of print the learner will see as well as its duration on the screen. Instead of using a manual to practice speed reading, the booklet that accompanies *Speed Reader II* is used to explain some basic principles of speed reading.

There are ten practice sessions in the program and each one is outlined in both the booklet and on a personal record sheet. Each practice session has the learner go through a different sequence of six practice activities. These activities are contained on a single program disk. Thirty-five reading passages are located in an accompanying data disk. Two warm-up exercises using letters and words begin each lesson. These exercises are intended to increase the learner's visual perception and peripheral vision. In the two letter warm-up exercise, a pair of letters is flashed on the screen at speed one. Each time the learner correctly identifies the letters, another combination is flashed at a slightly faster speed. When the pairs of letters have been successfully identified at speed fifteen, the learner can practice four letter combinations. Similar warm-up exercises using combinations of two, three, and four words are included in the practice sessions. The words are flashed at fifteen different speeds, and the learner must type in the words. Exact spelling is required. In both the letter and word exercises, each incorrect response results in a second try at a slightly decreased speed. At any time during the warm-up exercises, the learner can go to a higher level or stop the activity and get a score that shows the number of tries, the percentage correct, and the highest speed achieved. The learner can record these

results on a personal record sheet.

The eye movement lessons included in each session provide practice in increasing visual perception on groups of words flashed in a left-to-right sequence across the line of text and down the page. This practice is presented in nine different speeds and uses twenty different selections. An optional four question multiple-choice comprehension check is also available with each reading. The learner's score and the amount of time it took to answer the questions is provided.

The objective of providing quick visual perception of groups of words arranged down a column is practiced in the column reading lessons. The learner chooses from among the twenty readings mentioned earlier, selects a reading speed from 100-2000 words per minute, and reads a full twelve line column of text that appears down the center of the screen. A comprehension check followed by a score and an elapsed time for completing the questions is also available.

A reading passage lesson and a timed reading test are the final two activities in *Speed Reader II*. Both use a list of fifteen reading selections. In the passage lessons, the text appears across the full width of the screen, but page length can be adjusted by the learner from one to twelve lines. Reading speeds from 100-2000 words per minute are also determined by the learner. An optional eight question multiple-choice comprehension check is available. A comprehension score and elapsed answering time information is provided. The timed reading test activity enables the learner to periodically check reading speed. After the reading selection is chosen, it appears on the screen page-by-page. The learner uses the space bar to "turn the pages." After the selection is completed, the learner's reading speed in words per minute is displayed. An optional eight question comprehension check is also available.

Two key factors that make *Speed Reader II* an exceptional program for speed reading practice are flexibility and user-control. At the beginning of the program, sound-effects, number of disk drives being used, and print style options are determined by the learner. During each practice activity, reading selection, speed, and comprehension check options are controlled by the learner. As a result, the learner has the freedom to control the pace and sequence of practice activities. In addition, the flexibility of *Speed Reader II* extends to the editor feature of the program. The editor allows the reading educator to enter other reading materials and comprehension checks for further speed reading practice by the learner.

Both *MicroSpeedRead* and *Speed Reader II* are menu-driven and use single-key commands. Multiple-key commands are required,

however, in the *Speed Reader II* editor. The documentation for both programs is exceptionally thorough. In fact, the manual for *MicroSpeedRead* is so complete, that it could be used as a textbook in a speed reading course.

The four separate diskettes in *MicroSpeedRead* make it somewhat less convenient when switching from one lesson to the next, and there were several typographical and spelling errors in some of the screen displays. The lack of an editor makes it less attractive to those educators who like to customize their computer software to the curriculum. The fact that it is somewhat more expensive than *Speed Reader II* and contains reading passages written for a more adult audience may also make *MicroSpeedRead* less desireable in a secondary school setting.

Despite all of these specific differences, the most important educational difference between these two speed reading programs remains the method by which microcomputer technology is applied to the improvement of reading speed and efficiency. *MicroSpeedRead* tries to teach the learner techniques of speed reading through the use of text presentations on the computer screen, but all speed reading practice is done in a manual. The approach raises a serious question as to whether this is an appropriate use of the microcomputer. *Speed Reader II* uses the microcomputer's ability to manipulate text displays on the screen to offer the learner an opportunity to do the following: increase visual perception speed and accuracy and improve the eye span of text seen with each fixation. This seems to be a more creative use of microcomputer technology.

WISCONSIN EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION NETWORK TEACHER SERIES FEATURES THE NATION'S TOP READING EXPERTS

Teachers will be able to learn from the nation's top reading experts via video programs being developed by the Wisconsin Educational Television Network.

Fifteen 30-minute teacher in-service programs entitled TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION are part of the network's Primary Grades Reading Comprehension project. the project also includes twelve 15-minute video programs, entitled STORYLORDS, and computer software for second and third graders. Teachers can use the video in-service programs with or independently of the student components.

The student video programs and computer software combine to help second and third graders improve their understanding of print materials ranging from storybooks to textbooks. The goal of the teacher in-service video programs and accompanying guide is to improve teacher's knowledge of teaching reading comprehension at the primary-grade levels.

The subject matter and experts that will help teachers reach this goal include:

PROGRAM 1: Background knowledge — Richard Anderson, Center for the Study of Reading, University of Illinois.

PROGRAM 2: Classroom reading instruction — Gerald Duffy, Michigan State University.

PROGRAM 3: Semantic mapping — Dale Johnson, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

PROGRAM 4: Vocabulary — Isabel Beck, University of Pittsburgh.

PROGRAM 5: Basic inference — David Pearson, Center for the Study of Reading, University of Illinois.

PROGRAM 6: Language experience — Mary Ann Hall, Georgia State University.

PROGRAM 7: Comprehension and decoding — Jeanne Chall, Harvard University.

PROGRAM 8: Questioning — Taffy Raphael, Michigan State University.

PROGRAM 9: Directed reading thinking activity — Scott Paris, University of Michigan.

PROGRAM 10: Story structure — Jill Fitzgerald, University of North Carolina.

PROGRAM 11: Main idea — Peter Winograd, University of Kentucky.

PROGRAM 12: Casual cohesion in text — Isabel Beck, University of Pittsburgh, and Dixie Lee Spiegel, University of North Carolina.

PROGRAM 13: Integrating writing with the basal program — Donald Graves, University of New Hampshire, and Problems in comprehension sections of work-books — Jean Osbourn, University of New Hampshire.

PROGRAM 14: Guiding independent reading — Dorothy Strickland, Columbia University.

PROGRAM 15: The Primary Grades Reading Comprehension Project in the curriculum.

The Primary Grades Reading Comprehension Project is scheduled for completion school year 1985-86. Plans are underway for national distribution of the project.

The project is funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

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REVIEW OF A RESOURCE

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Jett-Simpson, Mary. PARENTS AND BEGINNING READING. Atlanta, Georgia: Humanics Limited, 1984.

Mary Jett-Simpson's *Parents and Beginning Reading* speaks to parents in clear, easily understood language. The nearly narrative style is accomplished through the author's use of the personal pronoun, I, and the relating of her personal experience as a mother and reading researcher. The scholarly and personal view of beginning reading are blended well in this volume. Though research is cited to support suggestions for parents, it doesn't interfere with the flow of prose which is appropriate for the audience to whom it is directed.

The LAP technique is the foundation on which the suggestions rest and the thread of continuity that runs throughout the text. The technique is explained, described, and rationalized in the first chapter as a period of time during which parent and child can be in close bodily contact through having the child held on the parent's lap. Further the parent reads to the child as a form of soothing communication in an effort to provide experiences with the language and provide the foundation for alternate reading experiences. Dr. Jett-Simpson suggests that parents begin using the LAP technique when their children are infants and continue to use it, in some form or another, until the child is in sixth grade.

The book includes suggested activities, children's literature selections, and information on language and reading development for children from pre-reading stages through middle grades. Appendices are also included that list sources of magazines for children, children's book award winners, lists of books for special days and other valuable information for parents interested in playing a role in their children's reading/language development. In addition, the chapters end with lists of interaction activities, bibliographies and guidelines for parents.

Though the title mentions only beginning reading, the book includes total language development both at the receptive and expressive levels and through both oral and written modes. Parents are encouraged to tell stories to their children, listen to stories told by their children, read to their children, listen to their children read, and write for their children while encouraging children to write.

The important role of developing children's reading comprehen-

sion abilities is emphasized through the suggested activites for children and information for parents throughout. Wordless picture books are suggested as one way to create and reinforce children's sense of story. Dr. Jett-Simpson clearly explains the technique and its rationale while avoiding any technical discussion of story grammar. Again, this is appropriate and desirable for the audience to whom the book is directed.

Other comprehension skills and activities for developing them are included. The necessity of developing early concepts such as time and space is explained and related to reading comprehension. Also included is attention to development of skills of predicting and inferring though the vehicle of pattern stories such as "The Little Red Hen."

Finally, parents are given pointers for monitoring the process of their children's reading through a discussion of the questions most commonly asked by parents regarding their children's reading and answers to them. Further, questions that can be asked of teachers during parent/teacher conferences are also included so that parents might continue to montor their children's progress throughout the learning to read experience.

Parents and Beginning Reading is a valuable book particularly for parents of young children, but also for teachers who work with young children and their parents. In fact, it's a valuable book for grandparents and other relatives of young children who are interested in promoting reading/language development.

PARENTS AS READING PARTNERS
"WE WORK BETTER WHEN WE WORK TOGETHER"

READING
BEGINS
AT
HOME

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean..."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master -that's all."

(Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass,* 1872)

The nature and origins of words have long held a fascination for interested scholars and lay public, not only to satisfy intellectual curiosities, but also because word knowledge has particular importance in literate societies. For the same reasons, scholarly interests have turned toward determining the nature of vocabulary development - that is, how and to what extent speakers and writers of English become, like Humpty Dumpty, masters of our lexical stock.

The outcomes of these investigations are of more than passing interest to educators; for word knowledge contributes significantly to achievement in the subjects of the school curriculum, as well as in formal and informal speaking and writing. In fact, a substantial body of research has been published in this century concerning the educational implications of these vocabulary studies (Dale and Razik, 1963). The purpose of this digest, then, is to summarize briefly how these interests are expressed in current literature and to suggest some sources available for further reading.

Definition of Vocabulary

The vocabulary, or *lexicon,* of a language encompasses the stock of words of that language which is at the disposal of a speaker or writer. Contained within this lexical storehouse is a core vocabulary of the words used to name common and fundamental concepts and situations of a culture, as well as subsets of words that result from one's personal, social, and occupational experiences. Probably the most important influence on one's speech is the simple circumstance of the language spoken in the country of one's birth. Each of us grows up interacting with and interpreting the world around us, to a large degree through the medium of language.

Sources of English Vocabulary

Languages are as vibrant and dynamic as the cultures of which they are a part, and the lexical stock of a language is a vivid exam-

ple of this linguistic principle. Words are, after all, no more than labels for *concepts* about the world around us, and as new concepts emerge or old ones change, the lexical stock changes accordingly. It is a linguistic paradox that change is a constant when applied to vocabulary. Many words in common use 200 years ago are now obsolete, just as many words in use today will be tomorrow's artifacts.

The English language is no exception, with a lexicon that reflects its many sources of origin and the effects of change over time. Besides the core stock of words rooted in Anglo-Saxon beginnings, English contains additional thousands of words borrowed from language communities with whom we have come in contact. Both of these sources have provided yet more words -those that have been derived from earlier word forms by addition of prefixes and suffixes or those that have been shifted to new grammatical functions. Still more words have emerged by the process of compounding in which existing words are joined to form new combining parts of words, or simply by creating new words out of "whole cloth." The ingredients of our lexical stock are indeed rich and varied. (See Bolton 1982, Francis 1965, Laird 1981, Pyles 1971, Shipley 1977).

Vocabulary Development

We do not learn most of our words by looking them up in a dictionary. Rather, we learn them *in the context of our experiences with listening, speaking, reading, and writing.* Many studies have been undertaken to determine the nature and extent of children's vocabulary development (Petty, Herold, and Stoll 1968). These studies demonstrate the truly prodigious linguistic accomplishments that children attain by the time they reach school age. While estimates vary, by age six most children have active vocabularies numbering in the several thousands of words (deVilliers 1978).

There is, however, an important difference between knowing words and understanding their broad range of uses and referents. For vocabulary development is first and foremost a matter of concept development. For this reason considerable attention has been turned in recent years to children's semantic development; that is, to the development of word meaning. (See Anglin 1970, deVilliers 1978, Foss and Hakes 1978). These studies illustrate that *how* words are used, not their length or frequency of use, indicates children's lexical maturity and, commonly, their intellectual maturity as well (Straw 1981).

Vocabulary Instruction

Vocabulary development is, of course, a lifetime undertaking in which schools play a critical role in enriching and extending the

young child's basic lexical repertoire, particularly through the medium of written language. Yet, "it is not the enlargement of the mind to new ideas" (Petty, Herold, and Stoll 1968). For this reason, vocabulary instruction properly belongs in all subjects of the curriculum in which students meet both new ideas and the words by which they are represented in the language.

The opportunities for vocabulary instruction are especially pronounced, however, in language arts and reading where words themselves can be an appropriate focus of study. Bearing in mind the dictum that knowledge of word meaning is the ultimate objective of study, teachers can provide numerous opportunities for students to explore the origins and forms of words as a means of extending and enriching their word knowledge. (See Dale and O'Rourke 1971, Hodges 1982, Johnson and Pearson 1984).

Teachers can also use students' personal experiences and prior knowledge to develop vocabulary in the classroom. Through informal activities such as *semantic association* students brainstorm a list of words associated with a familiar word, pooling their knowledge of pertinent vocabulary as they discuss the less familiar words on the list. *Semantic mapping* goes a step further, grouping the words on the list into categories and arranging them on the visual "map" so that relationships among the words become clearer. In *semantic feature analysis* words are grouped according to certain fetures, usually with the aid of a chart that graphically depicts similarities and differences among features of different words. Finally, *analogies* are useful in encouraging thoughtful discussions about relationships among meanings of words. (see Johnson and Pearson 1984, 33-50, for illustrations of these activities).

The linguist W.N. Francis once commented that "many people...go through life with a vocabulary adequate only to their daily needs...but never indulging in curiosity and speculation about words. Others are wordlovers - collectors and connoissuers...But even those who aspire no further than to the writing of good clear expository prose must become at least amateur connoissuers of words. Only this way - not by formal exercises or courses in vocabulary building - will they learn to make the best possible use of the vast and remarkable lexicon of English" (Francis 1965, 164-65).

The success or failure of schooling to foster word knowledge is in large part dependent upon teacher attitude toward vocabulary. Thus, in the final analysis, teachers who are "word lovers" themselves provide students both with a potent example of the value and pleasure that can be derived from exploring the richness and diversity of the English lexicon, and with classroom contexts for such exploration by drawing on student's shared experiences. Students may thus learn that language learning is a lifelong ven-

ture, one in which written language plays a particularly important role. Every contact with written language affords an opportunity to learn more not only about the writing system we use - its structure and how words are spelled - but also about the meanings and uses of words themselves.

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